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AUTHOR Mitchell, Carol L.
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ABSTRACT

This paper surveys the loss of important serials from and about Southeast Asia. At risk titles are described, including statistical serials, publications of regional presses, minority language magazines, science and technology journals, political and non-governmental organization publications, popular or mass press publications, women's magazines, magazines about electronics, and children's publications. The following problems and issues are then discussed: physical conditions of libraries and archives; war and turmoil; weak bibliographic control; scattered collections; secrecy and censorship; indexing and bibliographic access; training and expertise; privatization; shifts in collection management philosophy; shifting attitudes and laws regarding copyright; and electronically formatted titles. The conclusion lists institutions that might participate in an international Southeast Asian librarianship and suggests an action agenda. (Contains 18 references.) (MES)

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Serial murder in Southeast Asia: collecting and preserving serials in changing landscape

Carol L. Mitchell
Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin, USA

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Paper

SETTING THE STAGE

Whether due to the age of a resource, its accessibility at the time of publication, its mode of publication and distribution, its topic of interest, or the "popular" stuff of the masses, scores of journals, newsletters, and newspapers have fallen victim to time and history. They are victims of "serial murder." The scenarios that follow examples are drawn from Southeast Asia; however, the scene is played out daily across the globe for every day we loose valuable the information and unique cultural artifacts offered to us in serial publications.

A student or scholar approaches the librarian with a reference to a scholarly journal published in the colonial era newspaper. Our librarian sleuth checks major online databases then moves on to small printed bibliographies, but can find not evidence of this title. Has a serial murder been committed? Most sleuths will tell you that without a body, it is hard will be difficulty to prove murder has been committed much less find the culprit.

Non-governmental organizations representing everything from women, to peasants, to forests and the wildlife came of age in the Philippines after the fall of Marcos. The NGOs are spread all across the archipelago. If our librarian sleuth can find them, it is likely she will find broadsheets published on cheap, acidic paper. Can she get there in time to save these threatened species?

Last year it was election time in the Indonesia, or perhaps Thailand, Cambodia, or the Philippines. Astute politicians and non-governmental organizations promoted their views on

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the issues and people using electronic newsletters that have now apparently disappeared. Is this a virtual murder of important artifact?

Music, fashion, movies, and MTV are the stuff of a thriving pop culture. Slick magazines decorated with movie stars and slim models may line the check-out counters of the modern Southeast Asian grocery store, but what of their predecessors? The hard-boiled librarian detective finds few on a library shelf.

As a librarian and mystery afficionado, I see a parallel between my job of finding a serial victim and that of the hard-boiled female detective (my favorite type of heroine) who stumbles into murderous trouble. Like most of you who deal with specialized area collections, I regularly discover a serial victim. It may be minor reference to some long lost journal title or the existence of present-day advocacy group newsletter, but I am faced inadequate bibliographic control or no address to pursue the printed record of its existence. I no longer puzzle over the reasons why or how I may have discovered some skeleton, a remnant of the past or peripheral culture. My job is find evidence of the victim and ensure its preservation for some unknown scholarly detective seeking to solve other historical and cultural mysteries

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I survey the sad, but still inevitable loss of important serials from and about Southeast Asia. As librarian-sleuth with a knowledge and interest in Southeast, I will introduce you to the victims of "serial murder" and investigate the usual suspects with war, time, and ignorance the prime suspects on my list. I optimistically conclude that we can save past, present, and future serials through strong cooperative acquisition, document delivery, and preservation programs and outline some possible alliances.

Why serials. Serials provide a very regular glimpse at a society's workings. Statistics of trade provide us with a look at the basis of wealth for a particular nation. Health statistics give us ideas about disease and sanitation. While comics might delight us with visual appeal, they carry political overtones about underlying social and cultural trends. Ideas of beauty and women's issues can be found in evolving women's magazines. There are many reasons for an area studies specialist to focus on serial collecting. The very nature of this printed resource - its seriality - makes it an ideal artifact for detecting change and shifts in society. Yet serials are one of the most problematic of all library resources. Identifying, acquiring, cataloging, and inevitable claiming make managing Southeast Asian serial collections a labor intensive challenge. But the challenge is not without rewards. In my work on women's resources, and more recently on women's serials in Southeast Asia, I have found absolute gems that exist because of a resourceful librarian-sleuth was at hand to collect and preserve an unique cultural artifact.

Substantial increases to periodical titles, especially in science-technology-medicine, coupled with relatively stagnant budgets have forced many U.S. libraries to cancel sizable numbers of periodical titles. As usage becomes a driving factor in justifying acquistions and retention, less common taught languages (in the United States), like all of those of Southeast Asia, become prime targets for cancellations. Within Southeast Asian studies, cancellations may also be driven cost in combination with use. A recent study of domestic serials cancellations in the United States indicated that most of the titles targeted for cancellation were unique (Chrazastowski and Schmidt, 1997). I suspect that the same would be true if we studied cancellation patterns for Southeast Asian serials in U.S. and European libraries. A systematic analysis of serials resources to ascertain the rate of new subscription titles and cancellations is needed if we are to develop strong national and international collections.

The Victims: At risk titles:

Statistical serials: While annual statistical compilations may appear to be safe, closer scrutiny reveals serious gaps in the colonial-era statistical record. In an effort deserving accolades from

Interpol, Hitotsubashi University in Japan has mounted an international program to collect and preserve historical statistics of Asia. As a result, several unsolved mysteries have been resolved. For the Philippines, Yoshiko Nagano, an economic historian, has compiled a very comprehensive picture of colonial activity by piecing together runs of statistics for much of the nineteenth century from the Library of Congress, the National Library of Spain, and the National Library of the Philippines. Similar crusades for agricultural, climatic and election statistics to the monthly level are needed.

Regional press: We have done a fair job of ensuring the major metropolitan newspapers of Southeast Asia are acquired and preserved. I wonder whether our careful attention to the cities of Bangkok, Jakarta, or Manila has had the unintentional consequence of poor holdings for the dailies and weeklies from secondary centers of commerce. Because of the presence of the Library of Congress in Jakarta, there are far better holdings for the regional press than there is for the Philippines or Thailand. How can future generations understand the events of Davao of Vigan without adequate access to the daily or week press of those regions of the Philippines?

Minority language magazines: Like the regional press, languages other than the national or official languages, are likely to be underrepresented in Southeast Asia collections. Such serials are often small monthlies published by a chamber of commerce or local history society or irregular literary journals issued by a local group of authors.

Science and Technology: I suspect there is little systematic coverage of science publishing. Given the widespread interest in the Southeast Asian environment, U.S. libraries have collected a wide range of environmental titles. Yet their contents often are more social science and advocacy than science. What is needed is an international effort to assess our current and historical collections of theorectical, applied, and popular science titles. Southeast Asian librarians need to determine if titles such as *New InfoScience* (an information science title published by the Dept. of Science and Technology in the Philippines), *Majalah Geografi Indonesia*, *Anima* (an Indonesian psychology journal), or the popular environmental, *National Geographic*-type magazine of Thailand, *Nittayasan Sarakhadi = Feature* are being collected and preserved. The study and understanding of the history of science will be poorer if Southeast Asian titles are not available for future reference. In the U.S., area studies librarians await the development and implementation of the Center for Research Libraries' Science Research Materials Project (SRMP). This project will enhance their current scientific serials collection by creating centralized collection of important scientific journals from outside North America, focusing especially on "the burgeoning world of scientific publishing in the developing world."

Political and non-governmental organizations: I am referring here to advocacy organizations and issue-oriented campaigns rather than official or governmental political parties. Often with only a brief reference from a newspaper clipping, a librarian must try to locate a small political organization's publications, like the *Bulletin Board* of the National Movement for Civil Liberties in the Philippines, or the Tambuyog Development Center's *Lundayan Journal*. There is little to guide our librarian-sleuth in her pursuit. And once discovered, she may have trouble acquiring. Although subscriptions are inexpensive, large research libraries with large bureaucracies disdain making such small payments. Furthermore, the organizations themselves may not welcome a small check paid from a U.S. bank account.

Popular or mass press: In addition to the large portion of women's magazines that constitute the majority of mass market magazine publishing, the University of Wisconsin-Madison has collected car magazines, gardening and other hobby sorts of magazines, slick music/video/tv or mass media magazines, and sports magazines. Teen magazines tend towards a female market although I have seen some that appear to be produced for the teen male. Few in number are the serious gay and lesbian magazine, like Indonesia's *Gaya Nusantara* of the Philippines, *BreakOut*. Far more common are the gay sex magazines; however, these number far fewer than the porno magazines with women as their subjects.

Women's magazines: I believe the publications of and for women continue to be victims of oversight. Women's journal or magazine publishing falls into three broad categories: scholarly, advocacy, and popular. Research libraries now collect the contemporary scholarly and advocacy journals. Popular fashion, advice, and home magazines are far less represented in our collections.

Electronic including computers, cameras, and video: The explosion of an electronics industry that has ushered in access to relatively cheap electronic goods ranging from pocket cameras to sophisticated computer systems has been accompanied by the growth of a publishing sector for aficionados of high tech gadgets. With possible exception of computer magazines, few titles that document the dramatic rise in access to electronic goods by the middle class are held in our research libraries.

Children's: Research libraries collect very little in the way of children's publications. It is not surprising than that so few of the puzzle, readers, and other magazines, which provide clues to the transmission of morals and values, are available to researchers.

Many of these categories of magazines did not exist in Southeast Asia ten years ago. Today's titles will remain nonexistent if they are not in many of our collections. How much of these do we need to collect? Not much, but certainly far more than we are collecting. At the very least, Southeast Asia collections need strong representative collections of popular, mass-market magazines. For these titles, like all serials, serve as important barometers of change.

The Suspects: Problems and Issues

Physical conditions of libraries and archives. Nearly every article on tropical libraries and preservation in tropical libraries, including Southeast Asia, describes humid storage conditions and open windows bringing in not only street dust and smog but also rain and an open invitation for "biological" infestation and mold. "Poor" and "inadequate" describe not only the facilities in which resources are housed but also the resources themselves. The poverty of many nations forces publishers to use highly acid paper for book and serial production. It is not uncommon to find high quality publications in newsprint. Newsprint, humidity, and bugs are a deadly combination.

War and turmoil: Few Southeast Asian countries have escaped the tragedies of war and the destruction it brings to cultural heritage. Judith Henchy notes a dearth of early historical resources in Vietnam caused by the Chinese invasion of 1407-1427, "during which time the Chinese Emperor ordered that all original Vietnamese books be sent to Nanjing" where they have been lost. This was the first of many such purges in Vietnamese history. Needless to say, the year between 1954 and 1975 were not kind to Vietnamese printed heritage. Vietnam is not alone. Cambodia under Pol Pot suffered the total destruction of its printed heritage. The Philippines lost important collection during World War II. After the U.S. forces bombed Manila in the closing months of the War, Ateneo de Manila University and the National Library lay in ruins.

Weak bibliographic control. Judith Henchy applied this term to the materials she worked on in Vietnamese archives, but it can aptly be applied to serials for much of Southeast Asia. She describes bibliographic access to Vietnamese records as "limited to the original card catalogs produced by the French librarians at the Central Library in Hanoi and the EFEO library." Unfortunately, such multiple printed and card catalogs are not uncommon. And the idea of national bibliographic networks, much less a single regional network is remains a vision. Only careful bibliographic control, including periodical indexing, will provide researchers with the access they need to collections. It is also a prerequisite to successful cooperative collection development and preservation programs.

Scattered collections. It is not unusual to find miscellaneous issues of a single title spread over several locations. Although not lost to posterity, such titles are of little value to the

researcher who wants to consult long runs of statistics or look for trends and rhetoric in magazines. Cooperative preservation efforts can bring these scattered collections together.

Secrecy and censorship. For those of us accustomed to free and open access to government documents, acquiring Southeast Asian government serials can be frustrating. Even when government information is not officially suppressed, limited print runs and strict limitations placed on access to physical copies make acquiring government titles a challenge. Limited distribution may appear to serve a short-term purpose, but poses a serious threat to future generations seeking knowledge about the growth and change in their Southeast Asian societies.

Indexing and bibliographic access: There is no comprehensive index to the region's best journals and magazines much less to popular and peripheral titles. Indexing capabilities vary greatly from country to country in both quality and the costs of acquiring or accessing.

Training and expertise. Developing coherent Southeast Asia serials collections that will meet both the immediate and long-term research needs, requires multiple levels of expertise. Librarians must have broad knowledge of a vast and complex region, be aware of research trends as they emerge, be conversant in the book and knowledge industry not only of Southeast Asia but also of the United States and Europe where much specialized secondary research is taking place, and be attuned to multi-institutional collaborative projects from cooperative collection development to large-scale microfilming projects.

Privatization. For those of us developing Southeast Asia collections, see the trend towards devolution as the commercialization of important sectors of the knowledge industries. Publications and resources once developed in the public sector have been devolved to a commercial sector that seeks to recoup more than its investment. The consequence of marketing Southeast Asian dictionaries, bibliographies, directories, and indexes in a highly competitive information sector, will be limited less rather than more information.

Shifts in collection management philosophy: Limited resources, a seemingly expanding universe of publications, and explosion of Internet and associated technologies have changed assumptions about collections. Emerging from this "crisis" in scholarly publishing is a philosophy of collection management that dismisses the model of a large self-sufficient library collection developed for some unknown user of the future. Today's collections are managed rather than developed not for future generations but for a known clientele. During the 1997 ALA Midwinter panel, "Collection Assessment in the Library without Walls," Ross Atkinson succinctly stated this shift, "Priority is given to immediacy: meeting local needs now rather than national needs in the future." In the wake of the digital library, we, in U.S. libraries, are being encouraged to think not in terms of collection management rather in terms of "content management". Our libraries are no longer storehouses, but gateways. Yet, for those of us working with materials from Southeast Asia, the printed artifact is very much alive. As libraries seek to justify spending on high use resources, the foreign language printed is increasingly. As academic libraries develop core collections of highly used materials and depend on resource sharing for those resources outside this core, it is essential that we have strong cooperative programs that provide long-term access.

Shifting attitudes and laws regarding copyright: Following in the wake of development of the electronic delivery of scholarly content are the commercial publishers' lawyers and lobbyists who argue for sweeping reforms of our current copyright practices. Stricter laws and regulations regarding the sharing and delivery of resources will add a new level of complexity to cooperative development of serial collections.

Electronically formatted titles: The Internet disseminates news and information that is both unique and in printed versions. Most major dailies have mounted web sites that serve up the day's events and news. Archiving of these sites varies widely from nothing to years. Archiving of the major dailies is not problematic because the major printed papers are retained and

filmed. Far more problematic are those serials that are published only electronically. Southeast Asia librarians have yet to set standards or develop protocols that move us towards the capture and preservation of important Internet serial titles.

CONCLUSION

Nearly fifty years ago American research libraries conceived a bold cooperative experiment -- the Farmington Plan.

"Its objective [was] to make sure that at least one copy of each new foreign book and pamphlet that might be reasonably be expected to interest a research worker in the United States will be acquired by an American library, promptly listed in the Union Catalogue at the Library of Congress, and made available by interlibrary loan or photographic reproduction."

Although perhaps naive in today's world of supposed global information exchange, the Plan provided libraries with a long-term vision of cooperatively developing collections for an unknown future scholar. It is perhaps ironic that in a world of global information, that future scholar's collection may again be at risk. It is imperative that area library specialists take positive steps towards developing an equally powerful vision for the 21st century. The programs under ASEAN along other regional organizations provide an excellent framework for developing and implementing cooperative programs that extend beyond the region.

It is imperative that we create a truly international Southeast Asian librarianship. Southeast Asia librarianship has yet to evolve to point were librarians from the region fully participate in meetings and forums in Europe and the United States and visa versa. Full international that fosters the exchange of ideas is a prerequisite to developing, managing, servicing, and preserving our unique serial collection from and about Southeast Asia. So what does it mean to be international? At the very least we need to invite the full participation of the following institutions:

Southeast Asia

All national libraries and archives, major university libraries from each country, and the Institute of South East Asian Studies in Singapore.

United States:

Members of Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia (CORMOSEA) -- Cornell University, Harvard University, Northern Illinois University, Ohio University, University of British Columbia, University of California-Berkeley, University of California-Los Angeles, University of Hawaii, University of Michigan, University of Oregon, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Yale University

Library of Congress
Center for Research Libraries.

Europe

British Library
School of Oriental and African Studies
Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal Land En Volkenkunde (Netherlands)
Hull University
École de Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales
École Française d'Extrême Orient
Nordic Institute of Asian Studies

Pacific

Australian National University
National Library of Australia

Through CORMOSEA and the Southeast Asia Microfilm Project (SEAM), Southeast Asia collections in the United States have had some success at coordinating the development and preservation of collections. We have been less successful at sharing these successes and building upon these successes:

- In assuming collecting responsibility for different geographical regions of Indonesia, CORMOSEA members effectively distributed responsibility for developing strong regional representation of Indonesian serials in our collections.
- Recently, SEAM with assistance from the Library of Congress, took on the task of ensuring the acquisition and preservation of the many political weeklies and party newsletters in pre-election Indonesia.
- Using start-up money from the U.S. Dept. of Education, CORMOSEA is working with the Library of Congress and Center for Research Libraries to establish a Thai resource collection of serials. The Library of Congress will support collecting serials from its Bangkok office; the Center for Research Libraries will house the collection; and CORMOSEA members will create the bibliographic resources that will give researchers access to the contents.
- As part of the larger Global Resources Program of the Association of Research Libraries, CORMOSEA is undertaking an indexing project that we hope to see develop into a global project.

Action agenda

- Undertake a broad fact-finding project to define scope of the serials acquisition and preserveration problem. More than anecdotal evidence is needed to determine the need for wide-scale coordinated effort to collect and preserve serials. Such a fact-finding report would identify those titles and categories most at risk of being lost or destroyed, recommend priorities, and offer a long-term plan for ensuring Southeast Asian serials are available as records of growth and change.
- Develop appropriate legal structure to enable development of international cooperative endeavors.
- Work with commercial microform publishers in their efforts to create complete editions on microfilm.
- Develop a strong program to ensure bibliographic control and physical access to cooperatively developed collections.
- Develop microfilm registry or registries for Southeast Asia in an effort to eliminate duplication of preservation efforts.
- As part of project management, develop strong evaluation tools that provide for constructive feedback that will help in the development of future programs.

In closing, I would like to remark on the importance of maintaining realistic expectations. In this "can do" era of electronic communications, we need to be reminded of the many hurdles that remain in our path. In the end, as Dan Hazen reminds us, "successful cooperation must make economic sense: a structure that replicates existing capabilities at higher prices should not survive. Economics remains central." (Hazen, 1997, p. 272) While Southeast Asianists

may gain outside support for initial start-up costs, it is unrealistic to think such support will be sustaining. Ultimately, our cooperative models must be self-sustaining. To be self-sustaining there must be a vested interest by all participants.

A truly successful cooperative venture will require support, commitment, and leadership that encourages us to create "a spirit of interdependence [and] effective network organization and administration" to allow us to meet the collection needs of that unknown 21st century scholar. (Woods, 1997, 242)

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